

# Kunapipi

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Volume 5 | Issue 1

Article 9

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1983

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### Recommended Citation

Green, Kevin, Politics and Women Xavier Herbert's women, *Kunapipi*, 5(1), 1983.  
Available at: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/kunapipi/vol5/iss1/9>

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## Politics and Women Xavier Herbert's women

### Abstract

In all his novels, from *Capricornia* to *Poor Fellow My Country*, Xavier Herbert presents us with women opposed to and thwarting men in situations which end in tragedy. This is most obvious in *Soldiers' Women* but it is also present in *Seven Emus*. My first aim in this article will be to show that these surface resemblances reflect certain preoccupations common to all Herbert's novels and which are also present in such Australian classics as *Such Is Life* and *Coonardoo*. My second aim will be to suggest why such a continuous tradition should have gone unrecognised.

KEVIN GREEN

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## Politics and Xavier Herbert's Women

In all his novels, from *Capricornia* to *Poor Fellow My Country*, Xavier Herbert presents us with women opposed to and thwarting men in situations which end in tragedy. This is most obvious in *Soldiers' Women* but it is also present in *Seven Emus*. My first aim in this article will be to show that these surface resemblances reflect certain preoccupations common to all Herbert's novels and which are also present in such Australian classics as *Such Is Life* and *Coonardoo*. My second aim will be to suggest why such a continuous tradition should have gone unrecognised.

In 1960, referring to the genesis of the theme of *Soldiers' Women*, his only novel devoted to an all white society, Herbert talked of what he had

seen while on Army leave during World War II, when he had been struck by 'the general behaviour of women without the customary domination of men'.<sup>1</sup> Sergeant Blackstock, a surprisingly perceptive grazier when discussing politics, echoes this attitude when he laments 'the way our women have gone since we've been away'.<sup>2</sup> Possession and physical domination seem to be fundamental to this very male-centred view, which seems to be so obvious as to need no discussion.

In his critical monograph devoted to Herbert, Professor Heseltine comments that *Soldiers' Women* is outside the mainstream of Australian literature and has, therefore, attracted little critical attention. He notes further that the 'sexually confident, mated male is, with one exception, completely banished' from this war-time novel and contrasts this with the 'virile masculinity which had dominated *Capricornia*'.<sup>3</sup>

We might suppose that there are no 'sexually confident' men in *Soldiers' Women* because they are all at the war but an attentive reading shows that there never have been many and certainly not in the families that most retain our attention, the La Plantes, the Batts and Mrs Ida Fry. Herbert gives us his own analysis of the tensions which destroy the Batt family: Dr Dickey, having listened to Pudsey's fears, hopes and hates, describes the situation as 'that most fascinating of human problems, the Electra complex' (SW, p.234).

This diagnosis, while we may consider it clumsily forced on the reader's attention and while it certainly helps us understand Pudsey in her conflict with her mother for her father's love, cannot help us in our analysis of Mrs La Plante's relationships with her family. It is true that Mrs La Plante also dominates her daughter but here there is no struggle for a father's love; Mr La Plante is at the front and has, in fact, never counted for much, even in the eyes of his daughter.

We find in Mrs La Plante two different elements: a certain confusion of sexual identity and, more importantly, a pathological form of maternal attitudes. Herbert insists on her mannishness, in her hair style, her speech and in her dress, and this should not be seen as merely reflecting war-time circumstances, for Mrs La Plante has illustrious predecessors. In *Such Is Life*, Furphy's Nosey Alf also dresses as a man and not simply because this makes her work easier. Beautiful Molly Cooper has become Nosey Alf since this allows her both to avoid the problems met after being disfigured by a kick from a horse and to escape from the dependent position she had known as a woman (Molly's fiancé deserted her after she had lost her beauty). In this, she has reacted realistically to the platitude which Furphy twice includes in his narrative. At the very beginning,<sup>4</sup> Willoughby quotes Mme de Staël to the effect that a man

can be ugly, whereas, as Collins complacently tells Nosey Alf at the end of the novel (*SL*, p.323), a woman's job is to be beautiful.

In this wholly male world, the sexual stereotypes are clear and Molly Cooper merely obeys the dominant prejudices in becoming a 'man'. We can also see that the moustache, which Collins considers the distinctive sign of the true Australienne, gives the bush workers a sense of security precisely because the woman is thus seen as being less different, less feminine, less menacing to the practical, democratic but sexually unsure inhabitants of Furphy's Riverina.<sup>5</sup>

Again, in K.S. Prichard's *Coonardoo*, Mrs Bessie Watt, finding herself in sole charge of Wyaliba after her husband's death, dresses, apparently naturally, in a pair of trousers and an old hat of her husband's, since she works like a man, organising and directing the operations of the station. Thus, Mrs La Plante's dress and organising drive could be seen as a continuation of this style. They are, however, symptoms of something much graver.

Materkins talks of moulding a man, 'bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, a masculine projection of myself created by myself...' (*SW*, p.333). She refuses not only the moral autonomy of others, whether son or grandson, but she also refuses to recognise their physical otherness. Mrs La Plante imagines a continuing physical dependence at the same time as she tries to subsume her son's personality into her own. The umbilical cord has not and never will be cut, at least if she has her way.<sup>6</sup>

We can now also see why there can be no Electra complex in the La Plante family. The Oedipal situation involves jealous rivalry (normally unconscious) between a child and a parent of the same sex for the parent of the opposite sex (Electra's hatred of Clytemnestra, Oedipus' supplanting Laios). This jealousy can arise only when the child is aware of its separate identity, which is precisely what Mrs La Plante tries to prevent. Herbert presents us with a pre-oedipal situation where the conflict turns on the mother's desire to dominate, not on the child's burgeoning sexuality.<sup>7</sup>

Again, Mrs La Plante is not the first fictional Australian to exhibit these symptoms, though she is certainly the most extreme example. Already we have seen that Mrs Bessie Watt, 'Mumae' to the natives, had directed the mustering and gelding of the brumbies running on Wyaliba. The Aborigines have caught something of the ambiguity of Mumae's role in the name they give her, originally simply their transformation of Hugh's 'Mummy'. 'Mumae', however, means 'father' in the local language and for the natives Mumae has been both mother and father to Hugh, as well as master of the station and, significantly, an

equal of the elders of the tribe, as she proves when she changes the tribe's marriage rules, sweeping aside all the totemic considerations which rule the group's life, because they do not fit in with her plans (*C*, pp.3-16). Only Joey Koonarra feels entitled to talk to Mumae as a man and as an equal and then because he is 'the oldest man in the camp'!

What is striking here is less a widow's courage in battling on alone and more the fact that she unmans all the men except Koonarra, since only he is consistently recognised as being one. The implication of Prichard's narrative is that the kinship and marriage laws determine the social status and role not only of the women but also of the men, i.e. who can marry whom, who can communicate with whom; in Lévi-Straussian terms, the norms of acceptable discourse within the community. By sweeping aside this framework, Mumae refuses to acknowledge the Aborigines' autonomy, reducing both men and women to the status of inarticulate children.

As she is dying, Mumae tries to give her son her final advice, telling him she does not want him to take a gin but would rather he took a black girl than an unsuitable white one (*C*, p.58). Moreover, she recognises that she had been unable to find a girl (i.e. a white girl) for him. At the same time, she has told Coonardoo that she will come back, in the form of a white cockatoo, to haunt her, should she not look after Hugh properly.

It is scarcely surprising that, after such contradictory advice, Hugh reacts badly to his mother's death and the rest of his life is predictable: marriage to virtually the first white girl he sees, who finally abandons him, refusing to stay on the station. Earlier, Hugh had repressed 'every finer, less reasonable instinct' (had refused Coonardoo as a source of love) and at the end of the novel, the natives talk of her as the well in the shadow, the source of life, whose banishment/repression by Hugh had put a 'blight on the place' — and on Hugh.

This Jungian reading is obviously interesting but should not obscure the fact that Coonardoo is presented in the first instance as a 'real' woman. Hugh recognises her as such when, regretting that he has not accompanied his half-caste son to look for his mother, he admits that he has not got the 'spunk' to go with him (*C*, p.192). Hugh realises that he has been unmanned, by his wife who has left after an argument over Coonardoo but fundamentally by his mother, who had never let him develop naturally, never let go of him.

Thus we see that Mrs La Plante is not the first mother in Australian literature to have tried to remain in control of her son's development but she is far more successful (and destructive) than Mrs Watt. One strand

which runs right through *Soldiers' Women* is devoted to Mrs La Plante's determination to have and to rear a male descendant. If Materkins is so obsessed with the idea of having a son or grandson, while reducing to impotence not only her son but most of the men with whom she deals, it is because her social role differs significantly from that played by Mrs Watt. Whereas the latter is able to assume full responsibility for running her station, Mrs La Plante is in a more typically Australian setting where women are accorded an exclusively domestic role. That Herbert accepts this role stereotype in *Soldiers' Women* is clear when we consider those women of whom the narrator (clearly an authorial spokesman) approves, Selena Linnet and her friend Erica.

Selena, whose name indicates her close affinity with the cyclic patterns of nature, and Erica are presented as petite earth mothers. Fat and maternal, both are content to remain, surrounded by children and animals, 'keeping the home fires burning', as Erica herself says (*SW*, p.30). A woman's place is in the home; her job is to remain faithful to her husband and to have children, not to ask abstract questions about the purpose of life or to play an active role in the wider world. This essentially conservative view of the woman as a 'goddess of the hearth' is justified in Herbert's mind, since only thus can women respect their truly feminine, mammalian nature (*SW*, pp. 166, 466).

It is against the background of this attitude, made explicit only in *Soldiers' Women* but widely accepted in Australia (at least until quite recently), that we must understand Mrs La Plante's rage. Frustrated in her desire to think and work to the full extent of her capacities, she realises that she can 'achieve' only through a man. Hence her original love for her son has been doubly transformed into an aggressive drive to use men to achieve vicariously what they refuse her personally. The possessive mother love which we found in *Coonardoo* and which becomes a striving for total domination in *Soldiers' Women*, is distorted by an urge which J.S. Mill analysed in his *Subjection of Women* and which Herbert explicitly recognises in *Seven Emus*.

Mill saw women as capable of wielding a 'psychic power', of projecting their personal dissatisfaction or bitterness onto their children as a compensation for their material powerlessness or dependence.<sup>9</sup> In describing Appleby Gaunt, Herbert writes, in a striking passage, '...one can't help seeing him, in his beginnings, as a child of limited opportunity but of strong sense of superiority instilled into him by a mother possessed of the same strong sense ... the mother could even blame the father, along with the rest of the unappreciative world, for limiting her and her children, and to her children could transmit a very active idea of their

superior inheritance...'<sup>10</sup> Here we have all the elements which Mill was the first English thinker to see and which Freud (who translated Mill's essay into German) and others have developed in the various forms of analytic theory. While it is outside the scope of this study to enter into the detail of conflicting analytic theories, it is not adequate to consider that Mrs La Plante is simply suffering from 'penis envy', as classical Freudian — and phallogentric — interpretations might suggest.<sup>11</sup>

Firstly, her attitudes to her son would seem, even in Freudian terms, to be blocked at a pre-oedipal level. Both Fortitude and any son he may have are treated as children to be made, 'formed', 'moulded'. It is almost as if Mrs La Plante considers them as foetuses still being formed in her womb. Secondly, her attitudes, like those of Gaunt's mother, derive from a social reality, the limited intellectual role allowed to Australian women. This, while far from being limited to Australia, is nevertheless sufficiently marked in that country to have given rise to an abundantly documented literature.<sup>12</sup> Thirdly, a reductive, psychoanalytic interpretation of *Soldiers' Women* does not do full justice to the ethical messages of the light house in Herbert's narrative, as we shall see below.

The third major influence we shall study from *Soldiers' Women* is Mrs Ida Fry, who differs significantly from Mrs Batt and Mrs La Plante in two ways. Firstly, she is the daughter of one of the few dominant men mentioned in the novel. Much of her life can be seen, in fact, as a reaction to the austerity of her up-bringing and — and this is the more important difference — she has become something of a *femme fatale*, using clothes and make-up not for what Herbert considers their legitimate ends (to find and keep a husband) but to express her desire to subjugate men, rather than have any sort of sharing relationship with them.

Ida is also the experienced woman initiating others into her glittering world of elegance and sexual liberty — for Herbert, the two are linked — and if she does not actually kill any men, she is directly or indirectly responsible, the author makes clear, for the deaths of Pudsey, Felicia and her own children. Ida and Mrs La Plante are the most extreme versions of a destructive woman in Herbert's fictional world but not the first. He had already looked at this inversion of what is for him the normal man-woman relationship in *Capricornia*, where the Shillingsworth brothers, far from being dominant and virile, are, throughout the novel, dominated by, or running away from, women.

At the beginning, Oscar takes Mark with him to Pt Zodiac only because their mother had insisted on it. Later, Oscar begins to lie and change his life style partly to get on in his job but mainly to please the



nurses at the Government hospital. Very quickly, this transformation is so complete that Oscar, having married Jasmine Poundamore (a nurse), is hardly a Shillingsworth any more but rather has been converted into another member of the Poundamore family.<sup>13</sup>

Later, Jasmine deserts her husband whom she ridicules as being old, wooden and 'flaccid' (*Cap.*, p.39) and unwilling or unable to keep up with the social whirl. We see, then, that Oscar is quickly reduced to impotence, both psychic and sexual (he is 38 years old at this point of the narrative) by a dominating wife who has despaired of achieving her aims through him. The patterns discernible in *Soldiers' Women* had already been prefigured in *Capricornia* and will find more complex echo in the life of Jeremy Delacy in *Poor Fellow My Country*, where Rhoda finds respectability if not satisfaction with Sir Clement Eaton.<sup>14</sup> Delacy, after being abandoned by his wife, marries Nanago, who is sterile as is Rifkah Rosen, with whom he falls in love (and whom he sees as a sort of Mother Goddess, Koonapippi and Rebecca, mother of Israel in one). Alfie Candlemas, who is both a sexual and an ideological temptress for Delacy, is also sterile but intellectually so. She seduces him into politics and then into her bed, before he is left, disillusioned and threatened with physical castration as a result of injuries received in a political riot in the Sydney Domain. To underline the sterility Herbert sees both in her and in her Fascist cause despite Alfie's personal seductiveness (no male who comes close to her in the novel can resist her), neither her baby nor her book comes to term before, abandoning everything, she tries to flee the country.

Delacy is interesting, however, not because he conforms to the patterns of the dominated or rejected male which we have already seen, but because of his philosophy of sexuality, which he explains at the beginning and near the end of the novel. When he tries to make clear what he means by the 'power of the mind' (*PF*, p.25), he does so in the general context of 'charada' or love magic and of the rules which govern the choice of marriage partners, rules which, Delacy explains, the Earth Mother originally entrusted to women. Delacy comes back to this, his major and most consistent preoccupation, at the end of *Poor Fellow My Country* and again he juxtaposes the development of human intelligence and the idea of sexual restraint. Delacy (and again there is no significant reason not to see him as an authorial voice in this passage), after a detailed and erudite discussion of Aboriginal marriage law, initiation practices and the sexual regulation exercised by women to maintain social stability, calmly says that he is 'not concerned with blackfellow business ... except to exemplify this idea that's struck [him] regarding the

root causes of differences between [whites] that the blackman doesn't suffer' (PF, pp.1304-5).

This apparently startling disclaimer on Delacy/Herbert's part which is, in fact, a key to the architecture of Herbert's life work, must be interpreted in the light of a comment by Professor George Steiner on Lévi-Strauss' work in cultural anthropology. The *moraliste*, says Steiner, uses 'primitive cultures ... as a tuning fork against which to test the discord of his own milieu'.<sup>15</sup>

We can now understand the profound value of Herbert's 'Aboriginal matter', from *Capricornia* to *Poor Fellow My Country*, the analogous role of the lighthouse in *Soldiers' Women* and also much of the autobiographical material he has used in all his works, the ghosts he has tried to exorcise in his writing.

Herbert's interpretation of the woman's role in Aboriginal society is of interest to us mainly because it restates, in Aboriginal dress, the idea expressed by the lighthouse in *Soldiers' Women* that 'Female virtue is no accident. It is inherent in the womb for the protection of the species' (SW, p.265). For Herbert, female virtue and, by consequence, social stability are literally associated with the womb, since a woman who remains faithful to her cyclic nature will not only be herself healthier, more balanced but will also introduce into society that degree of measure needed to control 'a world made mad for ever by man's ... sex-hunger and ... indulgence...', as the narrator makes explicit in bringing out the link between moon and measure (SW, p.145). For Herbert, women's role is active; they are to be intermediaries between men and nature. He sees them less as objects of exchange (as Lévi-Strauss suggests in his parallel between language and marriage rules) and more as interpreters.<sup>16</sup>

Yet we find an ambivalence in Herbert's normally pessimistic attitude towards men when he develops his notion of a woman's 'ripe' times, put forward by Madeleine (a woman off the land) and repeated in a long authorial comment at the end of the novel. Herbert is forced to recognise that even such a woman as Selena can be 'inclined to indiscretion (sic) under the influence of the harmonic tide ... the waxing of her patroness, the moon' (SW, pp. 392-3). Faced with the need to admit the double nature of women's influence, source of both order and disorder, just as the Aborigines have recognised that the moon provokes 'wrong-side' love (PF, p.24), Herbert is driven to say that 'concern for the ... moral rules was really the duty of Adam ... during the period of [woman's] greatest vulnerability (sic)' (SW, p.393).

This passage clearly indicates a certain confusion or even fear on Herbert's part; at the end of his investigations into the relationships

between responsibility, including sexual self-control, and social stability, Herbert finds there is no simple, universal answer. Yet, despite repeated failure in this quest, he has persisted and this very obstinacy suggests that the roots of his search are much deeper than his (very real) intellectual curiosity.

Herbert gives us two important clues to these roots; the first in an article published in 1962, where he says that the deep motive of *Capricornia* was the father/son relationship.<sup>17</sup> The second clue is contained in his autobiography, where he says that his 'all-abiding problem' is his relationship with his father, whom he sees as a threatening, bull-like beast.<sup>18</sup> All of this would seem to suggest a Freudian interpretation of Herbert's development in terms of a classical Oedipal conflict between a dominating father and a threatened son. Yet a close reading of *Disturbing Element* shows a man frequently obliged by his work to be absent from home, almost entirely his wife's creature or child when he is there and aware of it (*DE*, pp. 1-19).<sup>19</sup>

Here we see, in Herbert's own family memories, most of the destructive elements he condemns in his fiction. To the author's youthful vision, his father had been emasculated by a 'flesh and blood harpy in his bed' (*DE*, p. 104). To the young school boy, overwhelmed by the surge of his pubertal sexuality and 'yearning and weeping' after his father, to whom he looks in vain for guidance, the realisation that his father is as 'helpless' and as 'emasculate' as he himself is, is shattering (*DE*, p. 105). Women and especially his own mother, whom he feels he should but cannot love, are seen as castrating monsters or 'succubi' (*DE*, p. 104; cf. *PF*, p. 556).

Unable to admit to hating and fearing his mother, young Herbert feigns excessive filial love (*DE*, pp. 12, 48) and, still conscious of the physical terror his father had inspired in him, he finds in the notion of the Oedipal father/son conflict an expression of his predicament both scientifically respectable and, we suggest, more in conformity with the Australian myth of the dominant male, than would have been a less phallocentric interpretation. We should insist that we are not concerned with what may be called the 'objective truth' of Herbert's childhood; our interest is in how he remembers it and how similar material may re-appear in his fiction. This may lead us, as here, to re-evaluate Herbert's own beliefs about his life.

Herbert had also seen continence or 'self-control' as necessary to his becoming a man and essential if he wanted to become an artist, to give full expression to his literary talent. In *Disturbing Element*, he claims that this is the correct allegoric interpretation of his school-boy story, *The Speaking Fish* (*DE*, p. 107).<sup>20</sup> He felt that he had to learn 'subli-

mation of sexual energy' in order to preserve his creative gift and he has publically recorded that he felt an imperative need to remain absolutely continent while he was writing *Soldiers' Women*; he could not let his wife 'do the Delilah' on him.<sup>21</sup> Again, we suggest that it misses the point to introduce the notion of an 'internalised oedipian father' as Pons does,<sup>22</sup> when the author himself has given us the image of a woman, which is more consistent with the tenor of his writings, both fictional and non-fictional.

These authorial revelations serve to underline the tragedy of Pudsey who, instead of being helped to develop her creative talent, is led into prostitution and then to her death through lack of both moral and artistic guides. Similarly, we see that Prindy's failure to 'resist' Savitra's 'charada' had, in Herbert's universe, cost him his creativity before it finally cost him his life. Total continence, freely accepted, is the only feature shared by the characters Herbert most seems to approve: Brew, Bob Wirridirridi and Bickering in *Poor Fellow My Country* and Leon in *Soldiers' Women*.

Though this article is devoted to a study of the influence of wives and mothers, it is instructive, for a fuller understanding of Herbert's attitudes to sexuality in general, to consider Mark Shillingsworth's reactions when Heather Poundamore tearfully rejects him (*Cap.*, p.32). Mark spends the next thirty years with a mate, Chook Henn. Since mateship is regarded as a fundamental virtue in the mythology of many Australians, it is particularly interesting to see how Herbert treats this theme in the lives of Mark and Chook.

Firstly, Henn's Dickensian surname, which spontaneously evokes his nickname, also indicates a basically feminine personality, which Herbert underlines in a number of ways. When Mark is ill, Henn is his 'kind nurse' (*Cap.*, p.23); later, when Mark toys with the idea of marrying Heather, Chook frets over the news as over an impending bereavement. Rejected, Mark goes back to the 'delighted' Chook.

Herbert's language suggests not a homosexual relationship, in the sense the word has in ordinary speech but, rather, almost a mother/son relationship. Chook Henn (Mother Hen) is jealous and possessive and Heather, who returns to Capricornia in the hope of seeing Mark, recognises that as long as Chook is around, she will not be able to counteract his influence (*Cap.*, p.314). Mark leaves his property to Chook, who goes to gaol partly to save the cost of living by himself but partly also to be with Mark. When, moreover, Herbert points out explicitly that Henn is a contralto (*Cap.*, p.289; cf. *SL*, p.321), the ambiguity of their relationship becomes obvious. Finally, Mark goes back to Heather permanently only after Chook has drunk himself to death (*Cap.*, pp. 354, 84).

It is not, then, a conscious choice that brings Mark to prefer Heather to Chook but rather the latter's death. This would seem to corroborate the maternal nature of Henn's role, as would the fact that during Chook's lifetime, Mark had not only been Heather's occasional lover but had taken different Aboriginal mistresses. The nature of Mark and Chook's attachment is not sexual but emotional and it takes the death of the 'parent' to free the 'child'.

It would seem, then, that the intensity of Herbert's preoccupations stems from his reactions to his childhood and adolescence. We cannot, however, reject as being too idiosyncratic his imaginative universe dominated not by the images of masculinity and virility typical of Australian popular mythology but by disturbing images of menacing and destructive women since, as we have seen, they are heightened versions of figures which have exercised the imagination of a number of significant Australian writers, especially men. Further, while such clusters of images can be read from a Freudian or Jungian point of view, they do not necessarily indicate neurotic or other pathological situations. They belong, in varying degrees of intensity, to most people's experience and can equally validly be read from a literary or other point of view.<sup>25</sup>

What is significant is the way in which Herbert has made more explicit some of the elements of the uneasiness which women have inspired in Australian novels and has gone beyond this to see the formative role which women could (and, for him, should) play in the social and educational and therefore political development of that poor fellow, his country.

## NOTES

1. 'I Sinned Against Syntax', *Meanjin*, 19, 1960, p.32.
2. *Soldiers Women*, St Albans, Panther, 1972 (1st ed., 1961), p.283. All further references are to the 1972 edition and are included in the text under the abbreviation *SW*.
3. Heseltine, H., *Xavier Herbert*, Melbourne, O.U.P., 1973, p.28.
4. Cf. Furphy, J., *Such Is Life*, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1975 (1st ed. 1903), p.9. Subsequent references are to the 1978 reprint, hereafter *SL*.
5. A full treatment of this subject would go beyond the scope of this paper but women with moustaches continue to haunt the Australian imagination. In White's *The Aunt's Story*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1976 (1948), Theodora Goodman's sister and brother-in-law are embarrassed when confronted with Theodora's real moustache and in *The Twyborn Affair*, Penguin, 1981 (1979), the child Eddie Twyborn and adult Curly Golson react very strongly to Mrs Twyborn's false one; sexual ambiguity continues to threaten 'normality'.

6. Cf. *The Aunt's Story*, ed. cit., p.164, where the umbilical cord is likened to a garrot and cf. *The Tuyborn Affair*, ed. cit. p.193, where White likens the womb to a prison; the maternal source of life can become mortal.
7. This situation has recently been studied in Olivier, C., *Les Enfants de Jocaste*, Paris, Denoel-Gonthier, 1980; cf. Storr, A., *Human Aggression*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979 (1968).
8. Prichard, K.S., *Coonardoo*, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1975 (1929), p.3. Subsequent references, in the text under the abbreviation C., are to the 1975 edition.
9. Cf. Mill, J.S., *The Subjection of Women*, in *Three Essays*, Oxford, O.U.P., 1975 (1912), pp.427-548, esp. p.544.
10. *Seven Emus*, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1959, p.15.
11. Cf. Olivier, op. cit., and a useful anthology, *Psychoanalysis and Women*, ed., Miller, J.B., Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1978 (1973).
12. See, among other titles:  
 Bell, R., *The Sex Survey of Australian Women*, Sth Melbourne, Sun Books, 1974;  
 Dixon, M., *The Real Mathilda*, Ringwood, Penguin, 1976;  
 Mercer, J. (ed.), *The Other Half*, Ringwood, Penguin, 1975;  
 Summers, A., *Damned Whores and God's Police*, Ringwood, Penguin, 1975;  
 Daniels, K. (comp.), *Uphill All The Way*, St Lucia, U.Q.P., 1980;  
 Carter, J., *Nothing To Spare*, Ringwood, Penguin, 1981.
13. *Capricornia*, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1972 (1937), pp.38, 9). Subsequent references included in the text under the abbreviation *Cap*.
14. *Poor Fellow My Country*, London, Pan, 1977 (1975). Subsequent references included in the text under the abbreviation *PF*.
15. Steiner, G. *Language and Silence*, Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1979 (1967), p.249. Reference is to the 1979 Peregrine edition. In the light of this disclaimer, this article does not consider the destructiveness of *black* wives and mothers, which would reinforce the general argument.
16. Cf. Lévi-Strauss, C., *Les Structures élémentaires de la parenté*, new ed., Paris, Mouton, 1967, and, more briefly, *Anthropologie structurale*, Paris, Plon, 1974 (1958), chap. 3.
17. 'A Town Like Elliott', in *Bulletin*, 31 March 1962, quoted in Heseltine, op. cit., p.11.
18. *Disturbing Element*, Melbourne, Fontana Collins, 1981 (1963), p.22. Hereafter, all references are included in the text under the abbreviation *DE* and are to the Fontana edition.
19. See, in this respect, 'I Sinned Against Syntax', art. cit., p.32, '...I was left at the mercy of women during my father's absence at World War I'.
20. See also *Larger Than Life*, Melbourne, Fontana Collins, 1981 (1963), p. x.
21. 'I Sinned Against Syntax', art. cit., p.33. Jeremy Delacy comes back to a similar argument to justify his rejection of Nanago, when he talks of women '...sharing ... Emasculating the male...' (P.F. 1296).
22. Pons, X., 'Caste and Castration', in *Caliban*, 14, 1977, pp.135-47, cf. p.139.
23. Cf. Bettelheim, B., *The Uses of Enchantment*, New York, Knopf, 1976, esp. Introduction; cf. Storr, op. cit., esp. chapter 5.